

(continued from page 36)

As a member of the Board of Directors and the Secretary/Treasurer of the North Florida Golf Course Superintendents Chapter, I know that we need and expect the support of the commercial companies and their representatives. The representatives come and join our meetings and always bring industry information that all the superintendents can use. The representatives at our meetings travel a wide area and bring us useful information from this area.

I hope that the representatives that the superintendents need and count on know that we appreciate their knowledge and expertise in their fields. ■

ATTENTION!!!

Lake City Community College Golf and Landscape Alumni

We need your current address — Please send address and phone number to:

John Wildom
c/o Lake City Community College
Rt. 3, Box 7
Lake City, FL 32055

MASTER GARDENERS Till the Soil of Knowledge

By: Catherine C. Elverston

Gainesville Last year alone, 1,100 volunteers in 33 Florida counties donated more than 25,000 work hours giving some 62,000 pieces of free advice on plant care, with a reported savings to consumers of more than \$400,000.

The Master Gardeners met in Gainesville recently to receive their reward for all that volunteering from the Cooperative Extension Service of the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS).

During the three days of courses, "They named practically every plant or tree and diagnosed just about every plant problem at hand," said Kathleen Delate, master gardener state coordinator at IFAS.

"The MG program was started in 1979 in three Florida counties to help Extension agents deal with increasing numbers of horticulture questions and plant problems of urban population," Delate said. Community volunteers are trained in intensive weeklong horticulture classes in return for committing 50-100 hours of service to the county MG program.

Workshops on 22 subjects — including landscape design, plant propagation, and the basics of plant disease — emphasized hands-on experience for the volunteers who are often called upon to assist in diagnosing homeowners' plant problems.

IFAS Extension Dean Jim App assisted in presenting the annual awards to over 70 Master Gardeners who have dedicated more than 300 volunteer hours.

Award winning projects included city beautification, a community plant seminar series, and creative educational participation at a regional Youth Fair.

The conference closed with tours to seven areas of horticultural interest, including Kanapaha Botanical Gardens, Paynes Prairie, and IFAS horticulturist Benny Yjia's Exotic Gardens.

"Master Gardeners are involved in a variety of county service projects," Delate said, "including demonstration and community gardens at Extension offices, convalescent homes, schools, and neighborhoods. They offer plant clinics at many public locations and diagnose plant problems via telephone, walk-ins, home visits, and computers at the Extension offices, to name just a few."

Any person interested in learning more about plants, their problems and how to solve them, should check with their county Cooperative Extension office to receive an application to participate in the MG program.



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